Memorandum of Interview of Robert Jensen, Security Officer, Holiday Inns, Memphis, Tennessee, formerly Special Agent in Charge, Memphis Field Office, F.B.I.
July 7, 1976

Messrs. Walker and Folsom interviewed former Special Agent in Charge Jensen at the Executive Offices of the Holiday Inns Corporation. The interviewers explained their mission and inquired about Jensen's tour of duty as SAC. He said he had been SAC in Birmingham and came to Memphis in 1965 as SAC after a stint on the Inspection Staff.

Jensen assured us that there had been no counterintelligence type activity against King either in Birmingham or in Memphis during his tenure at either station. He was sure he would have had to know had there been such. He gave the same answer with respect to technical installations in either location. In Birmingham there was a sound man who was an old timer with obsolete equipment.

We asked about the F.B.I.'s role in relation to the Sanitation Worker's strike in early 1968. Jensen said there was agent participation in observing the strike activities for intelligence purposes. The Memphis Police Department and confidential informants also supplied information to the Field Office. Jensen said the situation in Memphis was not the same as it had been in Birmingham implying that Memphis did not have as great a potential for racial violence because the strike was an isolated issue.

The "Invaders" were not of any importance until they got involved in the Poor People's March. They had no stature in the Black community. They did meet with Dr. King at the Rivermont Hotel after the disrupted March 28 march led by King. Jensen recalled that King was taken to the Rivermont pretty much by the police escort because that's where they

assumed King was staying. When he returned on April 3, he was booked into the Lorraine by his own managers.

Jensen says King's being at the Lorraine was known as that is where he was served by the U.S. Marshals with a temporary restraining order. This was in the April 4 morning edition of the Commercial Appeal.

Jensen learned of the murder from the Memphis police after it occurred. He dispatched Special Agent Hester to the hospital and within about an hour was informed that King was clinically dead. He was instructed by the Bureau to go ahead with an investigation. By midnight all of the evidence at the crime scene had been collected and dispatched in the care of an agent by plane to Washington.

The Memphis police, meanwhile, had been unable to do much of anything because they were caught up with the problem of coping with the riots and burnings that followed a brief hiatus of shock after news of the assassination was broadcast.

The SAC and his successor in the same office in Birmingham were in consultation by phone on the morning of April 5th about finding the seller of the rifle (identified by Remington during the night). Both agents wondered whether the assassin might be an agent of the Communists. Informers in the Communist Party and in every organization with a radical bias (right or left) were ordered contacted with negative results as to any plot against King.

To manage the investigation Jensen set up a separate force in the Field Office when DeLoach from the Bureau, and four inspectors visited Memphis on the 5th. He asked for more manpower and 16 or so agents were detailed. He was instructed by DeLoach: "You better find that son of a bitch in a hurry," and that was all. He did not recall that agents were

sent who had not formerly been police officers. He surmized that this had been done in Mississippi to avoid possible sympathy problems when police might be implicated, and hence was an early precaution the Bureau took in the King assassination case.

Jensen said there was effort to run out all suspect leads. This narrowed when the trail led to Ray.

We asked about the possibility that someone financed Ray. Jensen referred to the .38 pistol taken from Ray on his capture in London. This gun was traced from its origin in Japan to a dealer in California to a buyer in Georgia to a person in Birmingham and there sold to an individual in October of 1967 through a newspaper advertisement. Jensen surmized that this gun was used in robberies to finance Ray. An inquiry - among many - in Los Angeles brought out that about 15 unsolved robberies occurred there at pertinent times and the robber fit the general description of Ray.

Jensen replied to an inquiry about why it took about 12 days before anyone thought to match up the unknown subject's prints with the fugitive print files, that this was a responsibility of the lab and lab procedures cause some delay in such cases.

Jensen said he had no conversations with defense lawyers Hanes or Percy Foreman. After the plea and sentence Jensen and two agents (Hester was one) interviewed Ray in prison and attempted to cajole him into answering questions. The only significant things Ray said were that they never would have caught him except for the photographs of him. And, while he said "you don't have a good case" he admitted that Stephens at the flophouse "did get a good look at me." On terminating the prison interview Ray told the agents to take a good look at him as they were "going to have to find me." he made no response to suggestions he had lied about "Raoul." There was no response to Jensen's suggestion that

Ray's brothers had helped him get to Canada.

Jensen's final comments were about Dan Rather of CBS who asked what instructions Hoover issued to Jensen in view of the Hoover-King animosity. Jensen said, "none." He pointed out he got a bonus for his work on the Ray case.

Jensen feels confident that Ray acted alone. His life style and the unlikelihood that anyone would hire a loser like Ray convinces him. Jensen pointed out that the multiplicity of police agencies involved in the events of April 4 (MPD, the Sheriff's office and the State Troopers) makes it virtually impossible that the police were in any conspiracy to set Ray up as the assassin; someone in these three groups would have raised a question and disclosed the scheme.